

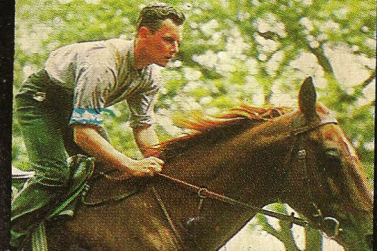
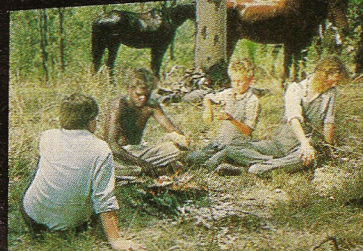
# FROM MICKEY MOUSE TO LUKE SKYWALKER...



Holiday movies (from left): "Never Say Never Again"; "Mickey's Christmas Carol"; "Space Hunter: Adventures in a"



Comic-strip fun: "Superman III".



More seasonal fare: "Class"; two Australian classics — "Bush Christmas";

## Your complete

Mickey Mouse oils his squeaky voice for his big screen comeback after 30 years, "Jaws" becomes a little larger than life and both James Bonds spring into action for a varied holiday programme

School's almost out and cinemas across the land are gearing up for the busy Christmas season.

A firm favourite will be the action-packed "Return of the Jedi" (rated NRC), the third of the "Star Wars" films and number six in the nine-episode saga. It's the last with human actors Mark Hamill (Luke Skywalker), Carrie Fisher (Princess Leia Organa) and Harrison Ford (Han Solo).

As with its predecessors, "Star Wars" and "The Empire Strikes Back", it's genuinely thrilling outer space stuff with no cost too great (\$32.5m) in the effort to make it all seem real. Preschoolers and young primary kids could find the aliens quite disturbing and the dreaded Darth Vader is positively nightmare material.

Nevertheless, the line between good and evil is clearly drawn, with Right winning out in the end and everybody learning that the forces of the universe are at the disposal of those with sincere heart and upright character.

From the depths of space we move to the depths of the sea as "Jaws 3-D" (M) surfaces in the form of another Great White, this time caught in an underwater wonderworld and wasting no time in gobbling up the locals.

It's a grisly horror tale designed to make you cringe, hardly suitable for impressionable youngsters, and not helped by another mechanical shark nor the nuisance of having to peer through cardboard glasses. But older kids will enjoy the gimmick.

Another "trilogy" film is "Superman III" (NRC). You still may not believe a man can fly but most of the effects are fun, even if the comic-strip script does get terribly coy.

Our hero (Christopher Reeve) remains incredibly naive as all those around him lead evil lives, including our own Pamela Stephenson as the top-heavy mistress of an unscrupulous tycoon. In other ways, the characters are flat and the film relies heavily on visual tricks. A winner with kids.

Especially for the young ones, Walt Disney's first and latest are on the same bill: "Mickey's Christmas Carol" (G), a new, animated short, and "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" (G), which is a re-release of Disney's first full-length cartoon.

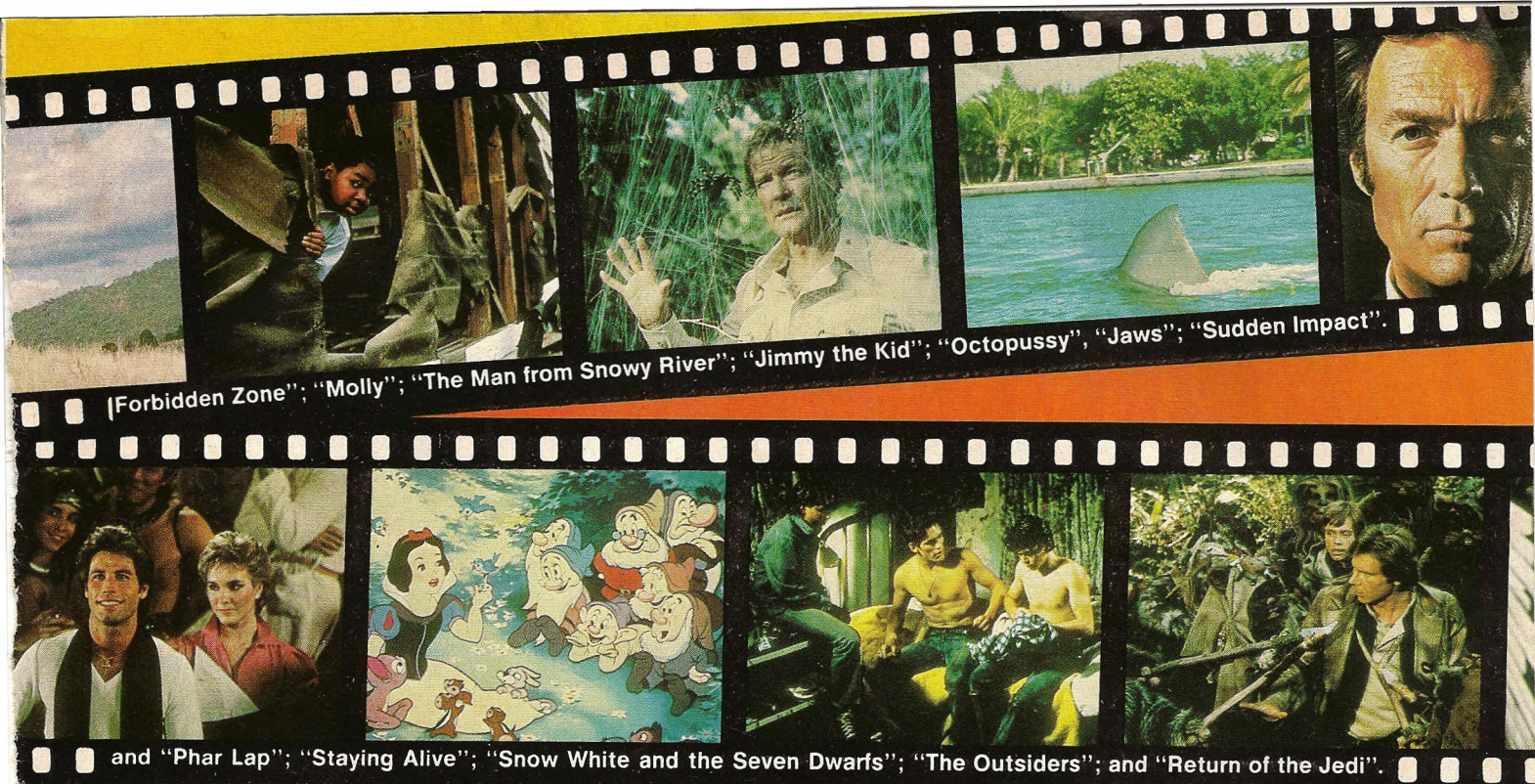
Mickey is still as charming and simple in his comeback as when he was seen last in "The Simple Things" (1952), and Snow White (the film was made in 1934) is still the fairest of them

Slowly turning the pages of worn-out filled-in notebooks, school children round the country sit waiting for that last bell to ring... while over in a galaxy far, far away Commander Luke Skywalker desperately hones up his skills with the laser rod as he prepares to do final battle with the Rebel fleet.

Deep, deep beneath the sea another set of fins and jaws gets set to terrorize the beaches, this time in 3-D.

And, a little closer to home, the world's most-loved rodent, Mickey Mouse, is oiling his squeaky voice, ready for his first film in 31 years.





# guide to holiday films

all. Donald, Jiminy, Daisy, Minnie and Goofy are all back as Mickey re-enacts Dickens' timeless lesson in goodwill. There are frightening parts in both pictures but Good triumphs and kids get to enjoy some quality animation for a change.

**A**nother "double" this season is the James Bond duo, Roger Moore getting out of ridiculous scrapes without ruffling his hair in **"Octopussy"** (NRC) — the last Fleming tale to be filmed — and Sean Connery equally cool in the aptly-titled **"Never Say Never Again"** (M), each at different theatres.

Although Moore reputedly was asked to be Bond 21 years ago (for "Doctor No"), both actors play the part to formula, glamorizing violence, murder and affairs ... aiming at the teenage market.

A more uplifting tale is our own **"Phar Lap"** (G), still riding high round the country. It's not so much a horse-racing movie as a down-to-earth animal adventure about winning against all odds, and suitable for the whole family.

Tom Burlinson is just as good in his second horse film. His first, **"The Man from Snowy River"** (NRC), is being brought back at selected cinemas and is ideal for children. It beautifully captures the spirit and romance of early Australia, with magnificent scenery and glorious music compensating for the silly dialogue.

For teenagers only, is the obligatory

follow-up to "Saturday Night Fever", **"Staying Alive"** (NRC), with John Travolta returning to trip the light fantastic and our Bee Gees on the soundtrack, joined by "Rocky" Sylvester Stallone, behind the cameras.

It's a cliché'd poor-kid-makes-good story with as much bare flesh and provocative dancing as "NRC" will allow.

A more appealing teenage tale is **"The Outsiders"** (M), Francis Ford Coppola's film of S. (Susan) E. Hinton's popular school text.

Personable, credible characters relate this based-on-truth story about young people and the need to belong. Stars include Matt Dillon, Leif Garrett and Diane Lane.

Another of **"The Outsiders"**, Rob Lowe, also appears in **"Class"** (M), Jacqueline Bisset's bright new movie, spoiled by a contrived plot. Urged by his college room-mate, a boy travels into the city, picks up and beds Miss Bisset, begins an affair and later discovers that she's his room-mate's mother. Bad language. For mid-teens.

**"Molly"** (G), another local animal story, is very much in the "Lassie Come Home" vein, about a girl, a dog and a fortune-hunter. Only difference is that Molly the dog, er, "sings". Not very well.

Then there's the remake of **"Bush Christmas"** (G), the early Aussie tale of three kids on the trail of horse thieves, and **"Space Hunter: Adventures in the Forbidden Zone"** (NRC), routine space stuff.

Other holiday matinee programming includes TV stars Don Adams and Gary Coleman in the oh-so-cute crime caper **"Jimmy the Kid"** (NRC).

Of particular interest is **"Brainstorm"** (M), Natalie Wood's last film. It's the eerie account of a machine which lets a person experience another's feelings. The intelligent script is claimed to be more fact than fiction. Obviously, for mature young people.

Co-star Cliff Robertson, who had worked very little over the past few years, also appears in **"Class"**.

And Clint Eastwood's contribution this season is another ultra-violent **"Dirty Harry"** saga, the fourth, **"Sudden Impact"**.

Detective Sergeant Harry Callahan returns to rout the culprit of another killing, using fair means and foul. Mainly foul.

Of all these films offered for the holidays, only a quarter are for "General Exhibition" — Australian or Disney films — and, in true showbusiness irony, a third are "Not Recommended for Children".

At least there's a variety .. with video taking such a strong grip on the market film producers have had to bring out the big guns. And the shops are set to be swamped with movie merchandise — film companies hoping that by the time our children open a nice new notebook at school next year it will have Skywalker and his laser rod on the cover.

— IAN HORNER

